



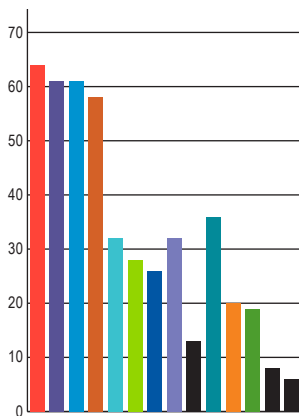
**NOAA  
FISHERIES**

In 2017, NOAA Fisheries issued more than 20,000 HMS angling permits and nearly 4,000 HMS charter/headboat permits.

#### PRIMARY TARGET SPECIES

Sailfish, blue marlin, white marlin, or yellowfin tuna are targeted in over half of Atlantic HMS tournaments.

Percent of HMS Tournaments Registered for each Species or Group in 2017.



- Yellowfin tuna 64%
- Blue marlin 61%
- Sailfish 61%
- White marlin 58%
- Bluefin tuna 32%
- Swordfish 28%
- Pelagic sharks 26%
- Bigeye tuna 32%
- Longbill spearfish 13%
- Roundscale spearfish 36%
- Albacore tuna 20%
- Skipjack tuna 19%
- Large coastal sharks 8%
- Small coastal sharks 6%

Number of tournaments = 287.  
Source: Atlantic HMS Tournament Registry; 2017 data.

# Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Recreational Fisheries

## MAINE TO TEXAS AND THE U.S. CARIBBEAN

Big game fishing for Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) in the United States is some of the most exciting fishing in the world. From Maine to Texas and the U.S. Caribbean, recreational fishermen pursue HMS (tuna, billfish, swordfish, and shark) for sport, pleasure, and food. Atlantic HMS angling trips and tournaments make important economic contributions in coastal communities along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. Nationwide, these trips drive more than \$231 million in sales and support 1,404 jobs. Unique among federally managed fisheries, Atlantic HMS are directly managed by the Secretary of Commerce through NOAA Fisheries, not by a regional fishery management council. NOAA Fisheries works domestically and internationally, with a federal advisory panel and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, to ensure sustainable and enduring fishing opportunities for HMS anglers.



Yellowfin tuna with popper

### POPULAR RECREATIONAL SPECIES

#### Maine to Virginia\*

2017 Species	Total Catch (number of fish)	HARVESTED RELEASED	% Private	% For-Hire
Yellowfin tuna	31,900		76%	24%
Bluefin tuna	14,900		71%	29%
White marlin	6,300		64%	36%
Albacore tuna	2,400		61%	39%
Common thresher	1,800		76%	24%

#### North Carolina to Texas and Puerto Rico\*\*

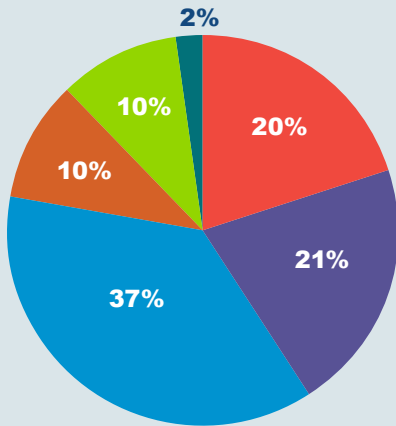
2017 Species	Total Catch (number of fish)	HARVESTED RELEASED	% Private	% For-Hire
Atlantic sharpnose shark	750,500		97%	3%
Blacktip shark	622,600		96%	4%
Yellowfin tuna	139,100		56%	44%

\*Source: Large Pelagic Survey \*\* Source: Marine Recreational Information Program

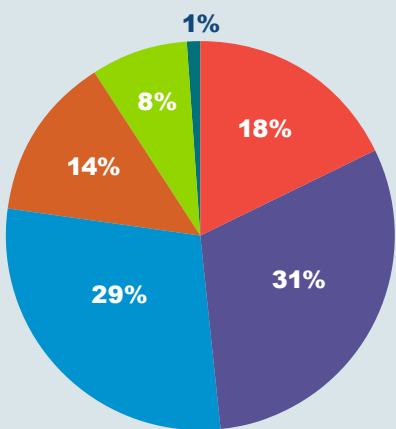
White marlin harvest estimate is based on a combination of data sources including the Large Pelagic Survey, MRIP, HMS Automated Landings Reporting System, HMS tournament reports, and the North Carolina and Maryland Catch Card Programs

## Permits and Tournaments by Region

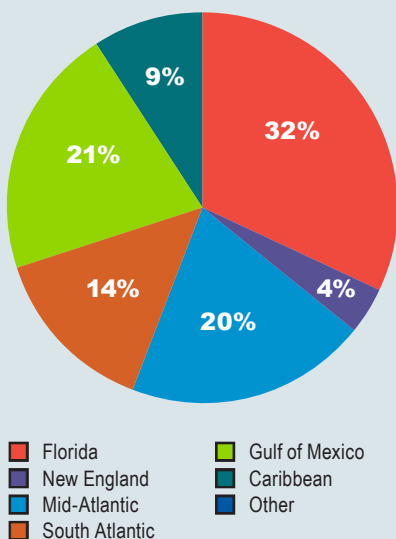
### HMS ANGLING VESSEL PERMITS (2017)



### HMS CHARTER/HEADBOAT VESSEL PERMITS (2017)



### HMS TOURNAMENTS (2008-2017)



## ESTIMATED 2016 HMS TOURNAMENT AND NON-TOURNAMENT ANGLING EXPENDITURES AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS TO THE UNITED STATES ECONOMY

Tournament expenditures include those associated with tournament operation and participant trip expenditures. Non-tournament HMS angling expenditures include HMS angling trip-related expenditures (e.g., fuel, bait, food, and lodging).

### BY THE NUMBERS

Expenditure Category	Expenditures (in thousands)	Jobs	Total Output (in thousands)	Value Added (in thousands)	Income (in thousands)
Non-Tournament Trips	\$46,675	577	\$103,327	\$54,816	\$30,537
Tournament Participation	\$37,545	532	\$84,671	\$46,181	\$26,153
Tournament Operations	\$20,170	295	\$43,970	\$26,100	\$15,121

## Species Spotlight

### WHITE MARLIN

Atlantic white marlin are found in the warmer waters of the Atlantic, including the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, and are the most frequently caught billfish in our Atlantic recreational fisheries. In the United States, white marlin and other billfish are reserved exclusively for recreational fisheries outside of the Pacific Islands. Atlantic white marlin are considered overfished, but are no longer subject to overfishing. They are important to the U.S. recreational fishery, and are the target of some of the largest recreational fishing tournaments in the world. Recreational catches of Atlantic white marlin have greatly increased in the past decade thanks to international recovery efforts and the implementation of circle hook requirements in U.S. pelagic longline fisheries which help fish to survive when released. The Atlantic recreational billfish fishery is overwhelmingly a catch-and-release fishery as a result of an annual 250 fish landing limit for the recreational fishery and the conservation ethics of anglers. Recreational anglers are required to report all white marlin harvested outside of tournaments, while tournaments are required to report all harvest associated with their events.



### FISHING FOR BLUEFIN TUNA, BILLFISH, OR SWORDFISH?

Fishing for bluefin tuna, billfish, or swordfish? Remember to report landings, as well as dead discards for bluefin tuna. Check out the NOAA Fisheries mobile reporting app at: <https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/mobileApp> go to <https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/> or call 888-872-8862 (for tuna) or 800-894-5528 (for billfish and swordfish)

### LEARN MORE

For more information about Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management, visit <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species>

Brad McHale: Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Recreational Fisheries Coordinator, [brad.mchale@noaa.gov](mailto:brad.mchale@noaa.gov), (978) 281-9260

Clifford Hutt: Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Recreational Fisheries Coordinator, [cliff.hutt@noaa.gov](mailto:cliff.hutt@noaa.gov), (301) 427-8503